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DEVOTED TO  
THE STUDY OF THEOSOPHY, ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY,  
THE OCCULT SCIENCES AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.  
ISSUED MONTHLY.

WILLIAM JOHN WALTERS, - - - - - Managing Editor.

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The Editors will endeavor to answer satisfactory, but of necessity briefly, any question addressed to them in a spirit of serious enquiry, if pertaining to the subjects to which *MERCURY* is devoted.

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All Editorial Correspondence and Books for Review should be addressed to

W. J. WALTERS,  
PALACE HOTEL, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.



*Satyan Nasti Para Dharmah.*

## Objects of the Theosophical Society.

To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color.

To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.

To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

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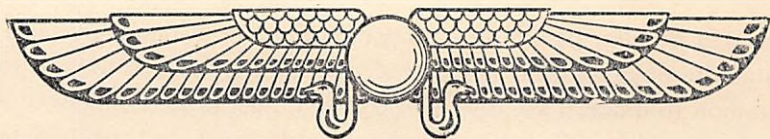
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"Point out the 'Way'—However dimly, and lost among the host, as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness."



# MERCURY

Official Organ of the American Section, T. S.

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## SOME THOUGHTS FOR THE PRESENT YEAR.

**A**nother milestone has been left behind, and the record of our life for the fateful year of 1897, has been delivered into the keeping of that "Law of rigid—tho' perfect justice—which rules the world," and a new scroll with its white page unrolls before us, waiting for the thoughts, words and deeds, which shall be indelibly impressed thereon, as one day follows another, down the stream of Life. Those of us who have taken Theosophy into our hearts as the best beloved, and have in the past deemed no gift or service too great to lay upon her altar, will, in the short time that remains ere the chimes of the silvery tongued bells, usher in the new century's dawn, strive more than ever before to open up avenues and channels through which the new old Truths of the blessed Wisdom Religions, may find entrance into the mind and heart of heavy laden humanity, for only by work can we pay the boundless debt of gratitude we owe to those Great Souls through whom we have received knowledge of our divine origin, our forgotten home in the higher world and direction on the path that leads thereto.

So let us with a faith that is born of knowledge carry this great hope into the midst of the hopeless, and awaken a courage and inspiration which shall, sooner or later, bear a plentiful harvest. But there is one thing which we should all remember in our work, the Theosophical Society is, like the Israelites of old, a chosen



vessel, a peculiar people or a body organized for a special purpose, a definite object, and is not one of the many clubs or lodges, so common in modern society, whose chief object is to while away a leisure hour, therefore its methods of work must be peculiar to itself. The Society being made up of people of all nations, of every religion and belief and of none, there must be in it a great diversity of opinions, intellect and spiritual discernment. But as the chemist compounds his medicines which are to cure the sick from various unlike atoms that combine in one, so in this laboratory where the Great Chemist prepares his remedy for that great dire Heresy, separateness,—the origin of humanity's heritage of woe,—these atoms must combine in one, not in name alone, but in a living reality. All the little and great differences which mark their individuality in common life must be merged into the general good, if anything is to be accomplished, for the Master Chemist, unlike the common one, who prepares his medicine by exact measurement and rule, takes in every atom that presents itself for admission and depends upon their self conscious choice and action, for his superlative remedy. Therefore, let us take this to heart and each do his own little work in that "Spirit of devotion," which asks no recognition but whose own great reward lies in the fact that it is done for and with the Masters, who, to-day, as in the old time story, work as best they may for their younger brothers. And the spiritual force evolved through such devotion, will help on the Holy Cause, though we cannot measure the "mine and thine," for it must all be theirs.

And again I will liken the Theosophical Society to a wonderful great organ, whose chords of harmony will not only reach to the uttermost parts of the earth, but will echo down the vast corridors of Time, till Time itself shall be no more, when every note shall accord with every other note and the Master hand shall sweep the keyboard.

ENTHUSA.

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"Just as a spider spins forth and inwinds, as plants grow on the earth, as hair and down from man, so from imperishable [That] comes forth this all."



## WHY WE SHOULD STUDY THEOSOPHY.

### A LECTURE.

✓ The end of the nineteenth century in which we live, has justly been termed a very extraordinary period. The common feeling, the world over, is one of unrest and anxiety, the universal status one of a moral, political and economical crisis. The most ominous social problems are looming up on the horizon of every nation, rapidly evolving through popular discontent and restlessness into aggressive socialism, communism and nihilism, which only need a spark to break out into hideous, uncontrollable anarchy. All intelligent men, whether scientific or religious authorities, everywhere are anticipating some astounding but far from happy and peaceful future, and the general consensus of opinions admits that, in some way or other, we are nearing an important epoch of human history, so that religious people, especially the Seventh-Day Adventists, who for many years past have been looking out for the biblical "end of times," and the "end of the days of the Gentiles," when "many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." . . . (Dan. xii., 4,) now feel that those times are at hand.

On the other hand, according to the Adepts, and unless strenuous efforts are made to enlighten humanity, the present age is bound to grow morally and spiritually from bad to worse for many years yet, down to the lowest point of the black cycle of evolution, at the same time as it grows better intellectually and physically, this accounting for some apparent social contradictions of our times. In effect, there seems to be a great development, a perfectness in everything connected with the material basis of this life; every effort of science, our inventions of every kind, go to enable us to pander to our bodily comforts, cravings and even vices, and we boast of our "enlightenment." But what of that? Old Egypt, Greece and Rome never lived such luxurious lives in the midst of the highest apparent enlightenment, as on the very eve of their destruction! And certainly, in the full sway of what we proudly term our "progress," religion has been growing less and less powerful, while a rank materialism has threatened to lead to every excess. Never before has the wealth of deadly inventions for augmenting the horrors of warfare been so appalling, while never before have the threats of universal wars been so persistent;



at the same time, the constant recrudescence the world over, of epidemics, of grinding misery contrasted with the insolent wealth of crushing trusts, of venality, vice and crime of every kind, and the instances of hideous cruelty in the masses—especially in America, the country of the future—where colored people are lynched or roasted on mere suspicion,—all this proves sufficiently that our boasted civilization is leading us downward, not up. This is further confirmed by the tendencies to anarchy mentioned above, the bitter revolt against fate, the insane disbeliefs or abject superstitions in the lower classes, and the intense selfishness, the inexorable, cruel fight for existence and survival of the fittest in all classes, but especially in the upper ones; even the religious classes are growing rotten, and charity among them is too often only a mantle for hypocrisy or ostentation, or for sectarian or political purposes, so that more than ever the Master could now ask; “When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? (St. Luke, XVIII., 8.)

In connection with this sorry state of things,—which does not suggest a very great difference from the ominous time when “God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,”—(Gen. VI., 5.) some clever though eccentric American writers, like Dr. Buchanan, Capt. Kelso, Carter, Lieut. Totten, Dr. B. O. Kinnear, the English chronologist Dimblebay and others, are pointing to a threatening climax, possibly a final Advent, preceded by a “reign of horrors;” they even confidently announce through their own interpretations of the literal words of biblical predictions, some kind of cataclysm, apparently an overwhelming shower of meteorites from that most threatening thirty-three years swarm, fulfilling the well known prediction that “there fell upon men a great hail out of the heavens, every stone about the weight of a talent” (Revel. XVI., 21.) All this is to happen at the end of this century, or more exactly about February or March 1899. Moreover, a strange coincidence to note is that the Indian Sages, whose chronologies are the oldest on record and who claim for the age of the world billions of years as against the biblical 6,000, also assert that we are nearing the end of a very peculiar time, the end of the first 5,000 years of a certain cycle termed by them Kali-Yuga, age of Iron



or Dark Age, whose duration is to be 427,000 years more; and according also to these sages, the close of this first period which coincides with February, 1898, will probably be accompanied by strange phenomena and natural convulsions, as well as wars, epidemics and social disturbances probably lasting several years. Then again, astrologers have figured out that on December 30th, 1901, there will be a singular conjunction of six planets in a line, in one sign, Capricornus, with a seventh opposite on the same line prolonged, and this the astrologers claim, with Berosus, must cause a very extended, if not universal flood. With all these authorities at their back, readers of the Bible quote with a certain complacency that "there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation," (Dan. XII. I) when the earth "shall be visited of the Lord of Hosts with thunder and earthquake and a great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of the devouring fire" (Isaiah XXIX, 6) and there shall be upon every mountain and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towns fall, and moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold as the light of seven days" (Isaiah XXX, 25-26,) etc. [See note page 200.]

As the end of the century is rapidly nearing, we may have occasion to ascertain for ourselves the correctness or otherwise of these prognostications. At any rate, the subject can hide no surprise for members of the T. S. since the doctrine of Theosophical Cycles accounts for all possible cataclysms and connects all human events with the various phases of the world's age and evolution. Thus it is said in Theosophy that our present humanity, or fifth Root-Race is to be subjected "to sixty-four periodical cataclysms, fifty-six by fire, seven by water, and one small one by winds or cyclones" (Samvarta Kalpa, H. P. B. Glossary) and according to an Eastern Axiom, "seismic disturbances are only the physical sign of disturbances in the moral, psychic and mental fields," such as are well characterized by the present wanton, murderous tendency of bomb-throwing. Consequently, for our present period, the above mentioned moral and social unrest, and increase of crime and brutishness is fully justified through the impending physical or cosmic changes brought about by cyclic revolution.

But, in opposition to this threatening moral darkness, another



interesting sign of our times is that of the growing tendency, in all parts of the globe, toward the study of what is erroneously called the spiritual or supernatural. Never, since the palmy days of Antiquity with its so-called "superstitions," has man been so much attracted by mystic ideas and fascinated by suggestions of the unseen world, or by the spiritual and psychic problems of his own existence, while at the same time, for centuries back, the world has not been so full of natural phenomena, manifestations and discoveries as it has within the last forty years. New words even have had to be coined to express all the facts new to science, and thus we have magnetism, mesmerism and hypnotism, thought-transference, telepathy, telekinosis, clairvoyance, clairaudience, automatic-writing, statuvolism, psychology and psychometry, magic, mediumship, communications with spirits, materializations and other branches of spiritism—or spiritualism—in which millions of intelligent men and women are now engaged. This, we are told by the Theosophical Masters, further proves that the world is now in a period of transition; at this period the forces which constitute the human being must assert themselves in one direction or another; the higher or lower, the progressive or retrogressive, the spiritual or the material principles must prevail, and according to which does prevail, the tide of human evolution will be turned for better or for worse. This then, accounts for the present intuitive anxiety of mankind concerning the unknown. Certainly one of the present characteristics is the extraordinary cropping out of spiritualistic literature, and especially such publications as one of those in our library, *Borderland*, exclusively dedicated to all branches of study and experiment—undreamed of forty years ago—on the intangible worlds. If, fifty years ago, a man had dared say, not that he was going to publish a review like *Borderland*, but even that the subjects therein treated could, ought to and would be studied at all, he would have been sent to the lunatic asylum; and a century or two ago he would have been submitted to inquisitional tortures and committed to the stake. Nowadays, on the contrary, the thirst for knowledge pervades all humanity, the old literature is left to children, the old religious doctrines are proclaimed insufficient, the old scientific pretences exploded. Every man and woman thinks, examines, experiments and reflects with untrammelled liberty, and wants



something more than superstition or mere dogmatism. Every one more than ever before is now confronted, not only by the uncomfortable sense of the unknown within self, but by the infinite unknown rendered daily more patent around us, and the facts collected on the matter during the last half-century have undoubtedly proven that the unknown must be more real and vast than the known, and that there is something more in reserve for us than the present sublunary material life.

Thus every one with intellectual capacity is impelled to repeat the ever recurring and disturbing questions.

What am I? What is life? Whence do I come? What am I in this world for? What after death?

And these queries must be acknowledged as the most important for humanity. They may have formerly been soothed by religious lullabies, but old-time answers no longer suffice; every human being is interested in their solution, and they can no longer be dismissed, especially at this phase of our Cycle.

We turn to science for her explanations; we get theories as changeable as the winds, the theory of yesterday being ridiculed by that of to-day, which will be upset to-morrow, so that finally science, in spite of its pride, is obliged to capitulate and answer, "we do not know; everything is mystery; and one mystery solved only leads to another deeper."

Religion still pretends—as in the dark bygone ages of ignorance and mental darkness—to know all about such problems, and to hold the keys to future life and death; but, when asked to show proofs of their assertions, the preachers retreat behind the old assumption that we must believe because what they say is in the Bible, or in the Koran, or in some other book equally called sacred and when pressed by our modern inquisitiveness and unbelief, by calls for positive facts—not words in dead languages subject to mistranslation—then the creed-mongers find nothing better to say than "Faith alone can save," finally confessing that they themselves really do not know any more than we do.

So faith based on doubtful authorities bitterly questioned is all that is left to our modern generation who have lost faith. And this is not to be wondered at, when we stop to consider the religious situation of the world. What do we see after nearly twenty centuries of asserted success in proselytism through blood and fire



through wars and persecutions in the name of the God of Peace, after millions upon millions of money spent every year in Missionary work?

According to figures taken from the Boston Missionary Herald, and which therefore, if at all biased, must be in favor of Christianity; the world's faiths are divided as follows:

Total population of the globe.....	1,425,000,000	
Protestant Christians.....	116,000,000, or 8%	
Non-Protestants, Papists.....	190,000,000	} 275,000,000 or 20%
“      Greeks.....	78,000,000	
“      Armenians... ..	7,000,000	
Not Christians, Jews.....	8,000,000	} 1,034,000,000 or 72%
“      Mohammedans..	170,000,000	
“      “Pagans”.....	856,000,000	

Taken in another way,—since the Jews and Mohammedans do acknowledge the Bible as a sacred book, in some shape or other, the above figures show that out of 1,425 millions of people, 569 millions or less than forty per cent acknowledge it, while 856 millions or more than sixty per cent absolutely reject it, many hundreds of millions claiming even to have other sacred works far superior to the Bible.

But the most important fact in the main, is that of Christianity,—while claiming absolute exclusiveness in divine origin and revelation, God-sent authority and infallibility,—embraces within the whole number of its nominal followers only a little more than one quarter (twenty-eight per cent) of the total population of this globe, against seventy-two per cent of anti-christians. Moreover, what is worse, the worshipers of Christ, who ought to be as a solid unit, are divided into four grand sections, bitterly antagonistic, while the particular so-called Protestant section is further subdivided into over three hundred sects, every one of which claims to be alone right, to possess alone the truth, all of the others being condemned as utterly wrong! This disheartening division cannot fail to divest the Christian Religion of a great part of the authority it might otherwise have; as a Hindu very wisely answered to his would-be converter, “when all christian sects agree between themselves then I shall turn to christianity.” And when further, christianity’s official exponents, while showing quite as much human frailty, if not more so, than those of other creeds, fail to tender their followers any satisfactory answer to the above mentioned



vital questions about the hidden problems of our life, merely offering some evasive quibbles about "unrevealable mysteries" and the "inscrutable will" of an unknown invisible God, it cannot be surprising that earnest enquirers after truth should feel dissatisfied with ordinary religion or church doctrines, hungry for some more solid intellectual food, and ready even to dissect boldly the very Bible to see whether in its core something cannot be found more than the Hierarchy choose to see in it. Others still bolder are thrown into absolute negation.

What are we then to do? Is blind faith, or materialistic denial, or despair, our only prospect?

But here, after the failure of both Science and Religion to satisfy the cravings of the human soul for true knowledge, there steps in a grand Philosophy, as old as the world, and carefully preserved in secret by the most perfect men, but newly divulged through the Theosophical Society. This philosophy does that which neither our science nor our religion has yet done, viz.: it gives a satisfactory answer to all questions and inquiries, a rational explanation of all problems of life, a comprehensive and coherent theory of the whole universe, including every human study, while it offers the means of reconciling and unifying all religions and creeds.

This philosophy is the so-called Theosophy; it is neither a new religion, nor a special creed, nor a sect, nor a science, but it is all in one. It is at once a religious science—a novelty, in this century when our scientists generally make it a point to be materialists and consequently atheists,—and it is a scientific religion—also a novelty for those narrow-minds who hold that,—not its sublime esoteric meaning,—but the literal dead letter of the Bible with all its incongruities, mistranslations and errors, is and must be kept above all science.

As a religious philosophy, Theosophy is positively the basis of all the beliefs and creeds that have ever existed, at all times and in all parts of the world. To Theosophy belong all the substrata of truth and tenets found alike in Christianity, Judaism, Mahomedanism, Confucianism, Buddhism or Hinduism of the present day, or in the rude mythologies of the savages as well as in the old lost religions of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Scandinavians, and even of the Mayas of Mexico and Peru. "The truth is one,



but like a diamond it has many aspects." This is a sacred maxim to which may be added that these aspects may also be more or less obscured by various layers of dirt. But the Chicago Parliament of Religions has proven that in spite of the pretensions to exclusiveness of the various sects, the idea of a common foundation for all the human religious beliefs—these being only the many aspects of the one truth—can no longer be contradicted or ignored; and this establishes the first unanimous religious basis for the universal brotherhood of men.

In all religions the truth is purposely more or less hidden under the outside husks, but Theosophy, to-day, claims to unveil more of the truth than has perhaps ever been done before, for the reason that the nature of our Cycle of time and the present tendencies of humanity imperatively call for such an unveiling. All these tendencies, whether for good, for spiritual attainments, or the deplorable evil ones, cannot be accounted for by either religion or our present science, but they are fully explained by Theosophy which also points out the remedies.

As a whole, Theosophy is the only philosophic system that presents essentially and on a solid basis, the solution of the mysteries of existence. To the enquiry "what is life?" Modern creeds only give some lame explanations, materialistic science none. The reason of this is that science deals with matter, with the physical body and tries to ignore or deny spirit, while religion deals only with some particular aspect of the spiritual, often at the expense of the legitimate necessities of matter. Theosophy alone says that spirit and matter, soul and body, are interdependent; and while showing how and why spirit must be predominant, it teaches what will be, if we only will prepare ourselves for it, our glorious future, our divine mission in the hereafter, not a monotonous Paradise of Psalm-singing, but a perpetual existence of useful activity, going from Devachans between earthly lives to Nirvanas between Manvantaras, always on a higher and more perfected Plane.

Theosophy, better than any church, explains to man all his duties to himself and to the whole world around him, because it gives him scientific reasons for such duties, and it really formulates the highest known code of Ethics, so that it is already conceded that it is infinitely more difficult to be a good Theosophist than to



be a good Christian. And, in connection with this affirmation, if it were true, as some charitable fanatic Christian opponents do assert that Theosophy is of the devil, I cannot forbear noticing that the inspiring Devil of our tenets must indeed be a mighty good fellow, the very essence of all virtue and morality and singularly inconsistent with ordinary devilish attributes, since the Theosophical doctrines thus referred to him, precisely strive to restrain people from all those sinful actions that might lead them into His Satanic domains?

Therefore, if you wish to open to yourselves new religious horizons, new views on the origin, destiny and obligations of humanity, new explanations as to the causes of sorrow, pain and misery, and of the apparent injustices of human lives, study Theosophy.

✓ If you cherish your old religious forms and cling to them, but wish to better understand them and thus be able to place a more enlightened faith in them, study Theosophy which offers new keys to the meaning of the Bible; you will realize that the "essential things in christianity are also the essential things in Theosophy," only this last has a ready explanation for everything whereby a new light dawns on the most obscure points, so that an unknown peace and satisfaction will be brought to the mind and heart. "No one need leave the church of his childhood to study Theosophy, but with the light he gains from the Wisdom-Religions, he will discern a new signification in his old rites and ceremonies." In fact as it has been very properly said by some who are in position to know, "the church would gain far more than it could possibly lose, were it to receive Theosophy as a friend and ally, rather than as an enemy."

Outside of the religious cravings generally inborn in every man, are you simply interested in the history of humanity? Theosophy will open for you vistas in the hoary past, about long forgotten races and mighty civilizations which will dazzle you.

Do you merely desire to understand more satisfactorily the scientific aspects, problems and possibilities of this world, the scientific workings of nature, of life, yourself included? You will find Theosophy develops the most coherent foundation and elucidation for all our scientific theories, while opening new and infinite avenues and realms to scientific study and discoveries. Sci-



entific assertions made by Theosophical writers ten or fifteen years ago, and then ridiculed by the classical scientists, are being daily verified and endorsed, even when Theosophy's previous claim is not fully acknowledged. \* The most extraordinary inventions of Edison and Tesla in electricity, like those of Keely in the—to us—new and as yet only surmised field of tremendous forces called Ether, have been foretold and explained by Theosophy.

Even in man himself, science is slowly, begrudgingly, admitting that there are latent powers of the most extraordinary nature, through the natural development of which every individual of our races will some day be as a full-fledged magician; but Theosophy alone points out what these powers are and how they will be obtained.

Finally, the very domain of the unknown around us, the unseen universe, in which Spiritualists, Mediums, Mesmerists are groping in the dark amid undreamed of dangers, is fully accounted for by Theosophical doctrines which offer a scientific cause and explanation for all spiritualistic phenomena, while giving us the only plain, common sense, credible, rational account of future life, or life beyond the grave, this mysterious but most important problem for all of us. Death, for Theosophy, is only the intermittent passage from this undesirable, illusory life of trial, into the only true life beyond, and thus death loses all the sting, the horror, it owed to ignorance.

But it would be wearysome to recite all that Theosophy does embrace, while I could not think of anything out of its sphere of luminous explanations, from the tiniest microbe of animal life, or the grain of sand of the mineral life, up to the millions of suns in the starlit infinity. Thus as I view it,—and I hope the reader and student will concur with me after a time of earnest study—it is a Cyclopedia of the knowledge that pertains to the godly intelligences. Hence its name, "*Theos sophia*," wisdom of the Gods or Wisdom-Religion. And all this must account for the extraordinary success and popularity Theosophy is meeting with, in this

\* These verifications are growing so numerous, that the various Theosophical Reviews are constantly referring to them and in The Theosophical Review (the English Monthly Magazine) a special department, the "Watch-Tower," is opened for them. [See the pamphlet "Scientific Corroborations of Theosophy."]



its timely appearance, when, in spite of many of its theories being exceedingly abstruse and too deep for many minds, it is gaining thousands of adherents in all parts of the world and among the most intelligent and cultured men and women of practically all races who seem to instinctively feel that in Theosophy lies the salvation of humanity for this potent reason that it is the key to all knowledge, and according to the Eastern Sages, Avidya,—ignorance—is the principle source of all human misery. More still, ignorance in this life kills not only here but also in our future lives. “Yea, ignorance is like unto a closed and airless vessel; the soul a bird shut up within; it warbles not, nor can it stir a feather, but the songster mute and torpid sits and of exhaustion dies . . .” “but learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul Wisdom, the Eye doctrine from that of the Heart,” . . . “for even ignorance is better than Head-learning, with no Soul-Wisdom to illuminate and guide it” . . . (H. P. B. Voice of the Silence, Two Paths, p 25). Now the “Eye” is modern Science, the “Heart” Theosophy which vivifies the soul, and this is why every thinker ought to study Theosophy.

I must here remark that all that their study needs, but needs absolutely, is a pure, impartial, unbiased, clear mind, free of all preconceived notions, and imbued with good, spiritual aspirations. Theosophy is not like some of our churches, that want you to blindly swallow on unreasoned faith, the most astounding nonsense, because forsooth, it happens to be found in the distorted or misunderstood text of some dubious prophet or in some epistle mutilated by tradition. Theosophy being nothing of a creed, therefore, you have nothing to believe on simple authority. More reasonable than our modern Hierarchy, Buddha, 2500 years ago, said in the *Kalama*; “Do not believe in what you have heard, do not believe in traditions, because they have been handed down for many generations, do not believe in anything because it is renowned and spoken of by many, do not believe merely because the written statement of some old sage is produced, do not believe in conjectures, do not believe in that as truth to which you have become attached by habit, do not believe merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. . . .”

In Theosophy, the injunction is to “ascertain everything for ourselves,” and we are given to understand that all the facts pre-



sented by Theosophy can be gradually verified personally by every one of us, "if we lead the proper, pure, spiritual life and cultivate our inner faculties, our dormant powers." Outside of this direct verification (if you are disposed to carry it on) believe nothing in Theosophical teachings that your reason or intuition cannot accept; if dubious wait until your mind gets clearer. Only beware not to confuse reason with prejudice, intuition with warped preconceptions resulting from habit or wrong education. Then, remembering that "whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall in nowise enter therein" (St Luke, xviii, 17,) and also "the pupil must regain the child state he has lost, ere the first sound of truth can fall upon his ear" (Voice of the Silence, p 17), be ready to candidly, honestly accept whatever may be plausible in our books. But, if there is anything you are not prepared or able to believe, unlike some charitable sectarians, we do not expect you to be damned for it.

And here I wish to call your attention to the fact that Theosophy does not warrant any militant, intolerant proselytism, similar to the well known religions practices. In fact, the Theosophical Masters say that, not all people being yet ready for it, the subject of Theosophy ought to be broached to no man or woman whose mind is not ripe for it, the sign of its timeliness being that the proper persons are naturally attracted by Theosophical theories. They must come to Theosophy, not have it forced on them. The best way of preaching Theosophy is by example, by living the life it prescribes; and the only way that Theosophists understand proselytism is on the one ground of altruism. Theosophy teaches that all men are brothers, and that peace and happiness will reign on this earth only when this doctrine of Brotherhood without distinction of race, color, sex or creed has become the leading fact. Therefore we must help our brothers, share with them our precious things; we must offer to divide our loaf with them, but if they refuse to eat or do not relish it, it is none of our business to force it upon them. So with Theosophical teaching. If the extraordinary facts, in all departments of nature, that these reveal, appeal to us and we are able to assimilate them, it behooves us to be prepared to impart them to those around us who may also be ready for them; in other words, our object in studying must be not only self development, which is only a kind of selfishness, but



also the wish of qualifying ourselves to instruct others, which is real altruism.

"Be, O Lanoo, like them, (the silent, starry watchers in the night). Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou, who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a teacher, hope or consolation, and . . . let him hear the Law." (Voice of the Silence, Two Paths, 37.)

Especially if Theosophy brings us peace and consolation, and if we find in it what we consider the eternal saving truth, we go to the full extent of letting our brother know of the good news, of the happy discovery, leaving to him what to do with it; if he craves for it, well and good; if not, no preaching, no coercion. Theosophy is eternal and it can wait until every one is ready to understand it and live by its tenets. The only thing especial to the present time is that we must act whenever we can, so that all those who have ears may have opportunity to hear, because in a few short years, at the end of this century, the door will temporarily close against further dispensation of the truth. But the greater number of Theosophists we may rally before that time, the more it will be possible for the leading powers to fight against the evil tendencies of the first part of the next century; and the better will humanity be prepared for the new efforts which will be made at the end of the next century as they have been in the latter portions of all previous centuries.

One more observation before closing. It may be supposed that all readers of this are earnest students and sincere unprejudiced seekers after truth, according to the motto of the Theosophical Society: "No Religion is higher than truth." But I must warn all at the start, not to expect that a few lessons, the reading of a few books, will suffice for mastering Theosophy. First, every mind is not equally prepared for it; some are developed to such an extent that they intuitively grasp all the most abstruse ideas the very first time they are presented to them and proclaim this system to be just what they were craving for, just what they had naturally felt and thought all their lives; others can with difficulty free themselves from conflicting previous teachings, while others again, with the best intentions can only master the easiest tenets after repeated explanations all of which points out to a different prenatal preparation. Then also remember that Theosophy embraces the infinite in all its divisions, while man's facul-



ties are yet finite, his brain, his perceptions and his time limited; therefore Theosophy having so many aspects, different branches of it will appeal more to some students than to others. One thing however, is generally conceded by all sincere learners; the more you study it, the more you will get interested, fascinated and desire to pursue the study. So to you all, I wish courage and perseverance, and if you join any elementary Theosophical classes I want it well understood that the object of those classes is not so much absolute teaching of texts and principles, as to show what to study and how to study, how to meditate and think, each for himself. One of our greatest writers has said, "I can write, but I cannot think for you." So the theories and facts will be delineated to students but they must assimilate them, and as the Masters say, "each to do his own thinking," this being only another way of expressing St Paul's injunction "Work out your own salvation," (Phillippians ii., 12.)

#### A. MARQUES.

NOTE (Page 189.) Having mentioned Dr. Buchanan it may be necessary to add that I was alluding to an article published by that venerable father of Psychometric Science, in the *Arena* (1890) and reviewed by Col. Olcott in the *Theosophist* Vol. XII, December 1890. In this article, Dr. Buchanan announced future social revolutions and impending terrible geological cataclysms, particularly severe on America, gradually increasing every year from the date of his writing, up to the end of the century, and culminating in intensity about 1916. Nor is Dr. Buchanan alone in his seismological predictions, for Falb, the Vienna prophet and authority on earthquakes, Milne and Perey agree to the fact of intense activity of volcanic forces for the closing period of this century, and the *Astrological Almanacs* of each year have been announcing more or less violent convulsions for nearly every month. This reminds me of another prediction in *Theosophist*, Vol. V. 50, republished in "Five Years of Theosophy," that cataclysm is to follow cataclysm, men will be swallowed up by thousands, new lands will appear and old ones subside, and secrets of old will be freshly revealed, etc. Theosophical authorities agree on this point, that, in as much as they are connected with the end of a 5000 years cycle, the climax of these expected calamities ought to be from November 1898 to March 1899, but they will extend over a few years more, owing to another minor cycle which happens to overlap the Kali-Yuga one. (See *Mercury* May 1897.)

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V "Truth wins alone, not lies; by means of truth the path doth widen out—the way the Gods do go—by which seers travel on, when once desires are o'er, to where is That, truth's grandest treasure house."



## THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES IN THE BIBLE.

HOW THE STUDIES CAME TO BE UNDERTAKEN.

"The Theosophist recognizes the underlying truths in all religions and everywhere draws attention to and vindicates them. In a Christian country he will show the truth hidden under ecclesiastical dogmas, separating them from the glosses that have deformed its presentation, and pointing out the relations of the Christian form to the forms of the same truth in other religions; and he will enforce his teachings whenever possible from those ascribed to the great Christian Masters."

These words from Annie Besant came to me through "Lucifer" I think, about three years ago when I was meditating how to give the members of a proposed Bible Class more wholesome food for thought than is generally given at such meetings. I dared not teach Theosophy openly because strictly orthodox surroundings forbade the attempt, neither could the unprepared minds of my would-be pupils receive it, even if it were taught them. But the truth or nothing I must teach and the question was how?

Annie Besant's words lay before me and an unspoken appeal to our unseen Helpers rose in my mind. I had no claim for help to urge except the picture of the girls asking for instruction, with no one to give it but myself, and their own words of promise.

I met the girls for a preparatory talk before holding the first class. After deciding the course of study, I asked them to grant me two favors, these being necessary for the success of our work. First, to keep the fact constantly in their minds, especially on class days, that they were asking definite instruction from an unseen but actual person; second, to walk to and from these classes in silence or to speak only on the subject of our study. For, if we dissipate our minds with gossip, they are not in a state to hear the Master's voice.

I, myself, kept my mind as much as possible on the object to be accomplished, *i. e.*, the bringing of these students into contact with one whom they should know hereafter as their friend and teacher by whatsoever name they might call him.

On class days we greeted one another gravely. Kneeling we repeated together the hymn called "Veni Creator," ("Come Holy Ghost our souls inspire, etc.," the prayer for Purity used in the Episcopal Communion services, and the Lord's Prayer. Being



seated, we opened our blank books, took out pencils for note-taking and dictation and commenced an hour's hard work. I gave them passages taken from various sources, relative to our line of thought and questions were asked for answer next day. At the close we rose, and standing, one of us would greet the Master in whatever words came to her . . . they always came from a full heart.

We did this for two years and then the course of life separated us, but I still hear of those classes from time to time.

### STUDY I

QUESTION. What is the meaning of "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, with all thy mind and with all thy strength?"

In order to find out the meaning we must take the passage apart, asking questions, the united answers to which will give us the information we seek.

FIRST: What is love? Answer, as defined by Phillip Brooks. "The delightful perception of the excellence of things."

Then, to love the Lord, is the delighted appreciation of his excellence by heart, mind and strength.

SECOND QUESTION: What is the heart?

We searched the Bible with the help of Cruden's Concordance. Not fully, but as well as we could in spare time during the week, we found; It is the place of remembrance. Deut. VIII 2-5.

"Thou shalt remember . . . thou shalt consider in thine heart, that as a man chasteneth his son so thy God chasteneth thee."

It is the place of desire. Ex. XXV 2.

It is the place of devotion. Ex. XXX 24-25.

It is the place of emotion. Ps. IV-7.

It is the place of inward speech. I Sam. I-13.

It is the place of meditation. Ps. XIX-14.

It can be changed. Malachi VI-6. Ps. LIII.

It can be large or small. I Kings IV-29.

It can be searched. Ps. CXXIX-23.

It can be broken. Ps. LIII.

God has it as well as man. Acts XIII-22

From which we gather that the Heart of man is the inward world of which, he, as a rule has very little knowledge.

*(To be Continued.)*



## UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.\*

Ideas are a matter of growth rather than of sudden inspiration or creation. The same law that brings the large out of the little in the natural world is at work in the mental world. The child is father to the man. Direction and destination are often disclosed by a backward glance along the road we are travelling. Whatever the apparent outward differences between the earlier and later stages of an idea, its essential nature must be contained in the germ and run through all its development. We may be helped, therefore, to a clearer realization of the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, if we trace the growth of the idea.

Universal Brotherhood is simply an explanation of brotherhood in its earliest and simplest form, that form expressing the relationship between the children of common parents. The idea born of a recognition of the family relation became more inclusive, although less intense, when the recognition of common bonds uniting brothers of a single family, was extended to the larger family of the tribe, and then of the nation. National differences are lost sight of in some degree, as man's consciousness expands into recognition of racial unity. The brotherhood of mankind finally must find concrete basis in precisely the same fact underlying the idea of brotherhood between children of the same parents.

What is this fact?

Brotherhood in the largest sense, as in the least, means unity. The idea which it contains, in ever expanding enfoldment, is that of oneness. Its realization requires a killing out of the sense of separateness. This, it appears to me, is what may be considered as distinctively the Theosophical interpretation of the idea of brotherhood. Universal Brotherhood is to be realized consciously by us, through a recognition, not merely that all the races of the earth are of one blood, but because the reality expressed in all diversity of form is One. "The life is more than the meat." And it is through a recognition of the One Life in all life—the imperishable One Spirit,—which is not ours but us, the I that is, that we find our oneness.

You will note that in the formal statement of the objects of the Theosophical Society, the first is, "The promotion of Universal Brotherhood, regardless of nationality, race, sex, creed, caste or color." This does not mean a destruction of the sense of broth-

\*A paper read before the Brotherhood Branch of the Theosophical Society, Denver, Colo., May 7th, 1897. By PAUL TYNER.



erly relation existing between children of the same parents, or between members of the same nationality or race. It does not mean an expansion of this sense beyond the necessarily narrow limitations of family, race, nation, etc.

Limitations are necessary in the earlier stages of our growth for the intensification of the sense of oneness. The idea of Universal Brotherhood is founded upon these lesser forms. It has grown out of them, and yet may be said to contain them all in the highest fulfillment. Yet Universal Brotherhood could not be grown from the brotherhood of the family, tribe or clan, if it were not contained in the earlier idea, as the plant is contained in the seed-germ. Brotherhood made universal becomes inclusive rather than exclusive. The differences of creed, nationality, sex, color, caste or class, which stand for exclusiveness, are regarded by Theosophists as passing appearances, not in the least affecting the imperishable fact of mankind's spiritual unity, but only serving for the time, in ever expanding limitations, to intensify and express that unity. These differences are not an essential part of brotherhood in the family or nation. The oneness of the family does not depend on the otherness of those outside of the family. There will be no otherness when we recognize the fact that the real basis for oneness in the family is the spiritual unity of mankind.

I have said that the conception of brotherhood, as standing for unity, is distinctively Theosophical. Theosophy is a science, a philosophy and a religion. It is the only system or school of thought in our western world which identifies brotherhood and oneness, scientifically, philosophically and religiously.

To make my meaning on this point perfectly plain, permit me at the outset to mark the radical differences between the Theosophical conception of the evolution of this idea of brotherhood and that put forth with much plausibility by a very important modern school of thought called "Altruism,"—a word implying, not oneness, but otherness. "Sense of separateness," is magnified and glorified by this school at every point. Diversity, and not unity, is the thought that is emphasized. Yet this otherness and diversity and separateness are, in the minds of the Altruists, identified, most illogically and confusedly, with Brotherhood.

According to this Altruistic idea, (if the Altruists were logical)



love must increase in virtue in proportion to the distance separating its object from self and because of the separation, love for a stranger without our gates, or even at the antipodes, is more virtuous and marks a higher stage of spiritual evolution than does love for those of one's own household, neighborhood or nation.

Prof. Drummond has attempted to summon the theory of evolution to the support of the Altruistic idea by placing love for others a step in advance of love for self in the ascending scale.

Sociologists of such world-wide reputation and influence as Benjamin Kidd in England and Professor Ely in America, followed him in this attempt. All lay much stress on the so called evolution of Altruism in society as the remedy for social evils. Curiously enough, one result of this emphasis on Altruism has been a pressing of science, even the science of Huxley and Darwin into the service of the church. What are called "the christian virtues" are preached with new fervor because kindness to the poor is in accordance with that Altruistic instinct which is alleged to be the latest fruit of evolution marking the ascent of man!

It may be questioned if alms-giving of any sort should be rightly considered a Christian virtue. Was Christ benevolent or philanthropic in any such sense? Did he offer the rich any conscious-salve in the shape of assurances that Altruism or alms-giving justified riches? Did he build hospitals or orphan asylums? Would not a walk through one of our asylums make him weep?

Altruism points with pride to its hospitals and asylums, its soup and coal distributions and its "charities," particularly to all those activities which come under the head of "Scientific Meliorism."

Theosophists are accused of selfishness for insisting upon the recognition in all men, not of otherness, but of selfness, oneness. Yet is not this precisely what the manifestation of mother love means? The mother loves her child, the child his mother—Drummond says because of otherness. Is this not a mistake? Does otherness make nearness and dearness? To my mind, it is herself that the mother loves, herself in expansion. And so with the love between brothers or between brother and sister.

A thing is virtuous, not because it is painful or difficult, but because it is right. Why is it easy and natural for me to concern myself vitally with the welfare of my "blood brother or sister," to make his or her need my own? Why is it that I am with dif-



ficulty, and then in far less degree, interested in saving one born outside my house from prison or prostitution, sickness or sorrow? Is it not because of the sense of oneness that a brother will sacrifice all to save a brother from shame, or from sorrow? He feels that the shame or sorrow is his own, and so it is. As well expect to gather figs from thistles as to find love and trust where there is not identity. It is as natural to suspect a stranger as it is to love one's own.

This is the feeling Theosophists desire to extend beyond the limits of the family circle, not by destroying or even lessening the brotherliness developed in the family, but by making men aware that all the considerations which lead us to identify ourselves with our brothers in the family, apply in fullest degree in the actual unity of humanity.

Brotherhood is shown by that man or woman who, despite ingratitude, even baseness, in a brother, spares no pain or thought to save that brother from suffering. Ask yourselves which is the larger thought? Which is the true thought? Christ said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," i. e., because of that in him which is thyself.

The Meliorists (for most of the writers of this school are agreed that all that is possible in amelioration, in some small degree, of our present social conditions) say, "Love thy neighbor as another" that is because of his otherness! This is why Altruism is artificial, insufficient and inadequate. With the conception of otherness for its spirit and motive it could not be otherwise.

As to results we have only to look about us. Like produces like. The so-called benevolence of Altruism, which seeks sanction in ameliorative dribbles for social conditions that crush the worker and enrich the schemers, simply adds insult to injury. Instead of drawing men into closer bonds of common sympathy, it drives them farther and farther apart. Happily, the work of the Altruists is not always as selfless as their teachings, or it would be cold and unfeeling, indeed.

If the brotherly spirit is divinely human; if it is warm and live; if it has within it that which is to redeem the world from sin and suffering, it is because the self, the real self, is of its very essence.

Brotherhood is a fact in the very nature of things. We have not to create it; to bring it into being, to organize it; it is already



as essentially a fact of man's nature as the air he breathes. What we have to do is to develop our consciousness of the fact. Mrs. Besant says: "A man needs sound thought to make right action; unless there is a basis of philosophy for conduct, the conduct will be erratic and unsatisfactory."

It is on this account that I have thought it worth while to bring before your minds this evening, with all the clearness that contrast affords, the two conceptions of brotherhood which may be said to divide our modern world. I have but touched on what I deem an error at the base of the Altruistic theory.

On examination, I think you will find this error is without foundation in science, in philosophy or in ethics.

Concerning the Theosophical conception of the idea of brotherhood, its origin and meaning, I think you will be able to establish its soundness by every evidence and argument which science affords. Its philosophy is well grounded, and its ethics will bear the test of experience.

We have all heard the story of the men adrift in a boat, who were dying with thirst, when they hailed a passing vessel and begged for water. They were told to throw their buckets overboard and found they had been in fresh water for days. So with regard to the truth of Universal Brotherhood. It is all around us and inevitable, but we cannot experience and enjoy the freedom it holds until we come into consciousness of the fact.

How is this consciousness to be attained? I do not wish to suggest any hard and fast course of study. To my mind, a truth of this supreme importance is sure to be realized, sooner or later, in greater and greater degree, whatever path we pursue, if only a desire for its realization is kept uppermost. "Ask and you shall receive; seek and ye shall find" are absolutely scientific statements concerning the mind of man; but you must have some idea of what it is you are asking, what it is you are seeking. "All roads lead to Rome." In our working together with the object of attaining unto conscious realization of Universal Brotherhood, it is absolutely necessary that we should familiarize our minds, in various directions, with the facts, events, happenings, phenomena of human nature and human life through which this truth of brotherhood finds expression. Each one of us in this matter may best help himself and others by following his own bent or inclina-



tion.

In whatever department of life your particular taste or occupation may lead you to put forth thought and activity, each will find in that department important and beautiful evidences, expressions, manifestations of human brotherhood, which another, in a different department, or even in the same, may entirely miss. Bringing together in our meetings our various individual observations and conclusions, we shall all be vastly enriched by sharing this knowledge that comes to us.

If development in certain directions in art, in education, in literature, in industry, in political administration or in ethical teaching and practice, plainly points to an enlargement of the general consciousness of universal brotherhood, we want to know it. We want to be in sympathy with the movements in which these developments are embodied; we want to understand them. We should be very sorry, even blindly, ignorantly, unconsciously, to oppose, stand in the way of or retard such development.

Let us get it very well into our heads that Universal Brotherhood is not an abstract sentiment that has something to do with the spirit only, apart from the body, with the future rather than the present. It is a grand truth interwoven with all the facts of daily life, standing in close relation to manners and morals, to dress and decorum, to eating and drinking, to walking and talking, to our buying and selling, to our work and play, here and now, as well as hereafter. This consciousness of human brotherhood which we seek, is not simply the mastery of any learned abstraction to be pigeon-holed in a back corner of the brain, or labelled and laid away on museum shelves. It is a very real inspiration and strength that may be used, and should be used, in all our work and play.

Simply by way of suggestion, which I hope some of you will work out more fully, take the conception of humanity as a social organism; that society as a whole is one grand living being, with closely related structure and function. Find out as far as you can, and present the arguments for and against this proposition.

You will remember that the leading individualist of our day, Herbert Spencer, denied that society should be considered an organism, on the ground that it lacked that essential of an organism, a common sensorium. Now, to a mind not hopelessly biased



by individualistic preconceptions; nothing could be more obvious than the fact that humanity actually has a common sensorium. There is no escaping the evidences of this fact. Sometimes it is an event blazoned into world-wide fame, whose renown goes down the ages, embalmed in prose or verse; sometimes it is a fact of every day occurrence in familiar life.

My suggestions have to do mostly with the tracing of this thought in sociology and its allied studies, because these have been my own special field of work. But it is far from being the only field. In art, certainly, there is splendid opportunity. That "there is no nationality in art," has come to be almost a proverb.

You will remember that only a few years ago the production of one of Wagner's operas in Paris, caused almost a riot on the part of a considerable number of excitable French patriots, who were opposed to everything German. The better sentiment of France condemned the exhibition as outrageous, and a short time afterwards the work of this great composer was received with marked honors in the French capitol.

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### LETTERS BY H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Extract from a letter written by H. P. Blavatsky to the American Theosophists Convention assembled April 28th 1889.

"I send my heartiest greeting and best wishes, and it is fitting and right that we should all review the position which we have assumed. In India, under Colo. Olcott's care, branches continue to be formed, and whenever the President lectures or pays a visit, a new center of interest is sure to be created. His visits in the spirit which animates him, are like a shower of rain to thirsty, sun parched soil, flowers and herbs spring up in profusion, and the seed of healthy vegetation is sown.

Here in England we have been hard at work; we have met some difficulties and surmounted them, but others seem to spring up at every step that is made. But a firm will and a steadfast devotion to our great Cause of Theosophy must and shall break down every obstacle until the stream of Truth shall burst its confines and sweeps every difficulty away in its rolling flood. May Karma hasten the day. But you in America, your Karma as a nation has brought Theosophy home to you. The life of the soul, the psychic side of your nature, is open to many of you. The life of Altruism is not so much a high ideal, as a matter of practice. Naturally then, Theosophy finds a home in many hearts and minds, and strikes a resounding harmony as soon as it reaches the ears of those who are ready to listen. There, then, is part of your work, to lift high the torch of the liberty of the Soul of Truth, that all may see it and benefit by its light.



Therefore it is that the Ethics of Theosophy are even more necessary to mankind than the scientific aspects of the psychic facts of nature and man. With such favorable conditions as are present in America for Theosophy, it is only natural that its Society should increase rapidly, and that Branch after Branch should arise. The Society must grow proportionately and not too rapidly, for fear lest, like some children, it should overgrow its strength and there should come a period of difficulty and danger, when natural growth is arrested to prevent the sacrifice of the organism.

This is a very real fact in the growth of human beings and we must carefully watch, lest the Greater Child, the Theosophical Society, should suffer for the same cause. Once before was growth checked in connection with the psychic phenomena, and there may yet come a time when the moral and ethical foundation of the Society may be checked in a similar way. What can be done to prevent such a thing, is for the Fellows of the Society to make Theosophy a vital factor in their lives, to make it real, to weld its principles firmly into their lives, in short to make it their own, and treat the Theosophical Society as if it were themselves. Then, consolidated and welded in such a spirit of Brotherhood and Love, we shall, unlike Archimedes, need neither fulcrum or lever, but we shall move the world. We need all our strength to meet the difficulties and dangers which surround us. We have external enemies to fight, in the shape of custom and religious forms; enemies too numerous to mention, but nearly as thick as the sand-clouds which are raised by the blasting service of the desert. Do we need our strength against these foes? Yet, again there are more insidious foes, who "take our name in vain," and who make Theosophy "a byword in the mouths of men, and the Theosophical Society a mark at which to throw mud." They slander Theosophists and Theosophy and convert the moral Ethics into a cloak to conceal their own selfish objects. And, as if this were not sufficient, there are the worse foes of all, those of a man's own household, Theosophists who are unfaithful both to the Society and to themselves. Thus indeed we are in the midst of foes. Before and around us is the "Valley of Death," and we have to charge upon our enemy, right upon his guns, if we would win the day. Cavalry, men and horses, can be trained to ride almost as one man, in an attack upon the terrestrial plane; shall not we fight and win the battle of the Soul, struggling in the Spirit of the Higher Self to win our divine heritage?"

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## OBITUARY.

We have to announce the death of brother Charles A. White, member of the Seattle Branch, who passed away January 11th, 1898. His remains were brought to San Francisco and the cremation services impressively conducted by the Golden Gate Lodge on January the 25th. Mr. White left his estate to the Theosophical Society for the purpose of translating Oriental work.



## T. S. ECHOES.

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### THE COUNTESS WACHTMEISTER'S MONTHLY LETTER.

TO THE EDITOR OF *Mercury*:

On my arrival in Worcester, December 9th, I was the guest of Mrs. Emma Clafin, and in her pleasant home had the opportunity of meeting a great many people. Visitors were constantly calling and evening meetings were arranged where lively discussions took place. The Unitarian Minister, Mr. Kent, kindly offered his parlors in the church for a lecture which was well attended, and the Universalist Minister invited me to lecture in his church on Sunday evening on "Prayer." The church was packed and Dr. M. H. Harris made a most impressive introduction in which he said that he esteemed it a privilege to hear the Messenger from the Land of the Midnight Sun, whose appearance in Worcester seemed almost providential for the church. My third lecture, delivered in Salisbury Hall, concluded my public work, but before leaving Worcester I formed the Wachusett Branch of the T. S. with eleven members, two more joining the next day. There were also present a large number of sympathizers who, though not actually enrolling their names are probably embryo theosophists who will join later on. This interest in Theosophy in Worcester is due to the unremitting labors of Mrs. Emma Clafin, who has not only held a class for study during the past year, but has lent her books most freely to all who desired to read them. Her son, Mr. Charles Clafin, was nominated President of the Branch, and Mrs. Clafin kindly agreed to hold a class for the deeper study of Theosophical Truths. From Worcester I travelled to Deerfield, a remote and lovely glen where the bustle and noise of the world has not yet penetrated. It was indeed delightful to feel the perfect calmness and quietude, and to rest in the genial home of the Unitarian Minister, Mr. Solley. He is one of those rare souls who literally and actually lives for others and not for himself, and Mrs. Solley, his wife, an old member of our T. S. is a gently nurtured and refined English woman, highly intellectual, a rare gem indeed to be found in that secluded spot. I lectured to the Woman's Club and the following days were spent in visiting and talking to the residents of the village. Two ladies, stone deaf, produce the most highly finished photographs, which find a ready sale in both New York and London. And other ladies forming an Embroidery Guild, send their exquisite work to all parts of the country. My sojourn in this little village was most pleasant and I left with regret, hoping however that the consolation which Theosophy brings may have been implanted in some weary hearts.

My next destination was Monson, where I was met by Mr. Freeton Ball, a most promising young lawyer, and at his home that evening I lectured to about twenty persons. Interest seemed to be aroused in Theosophy, but as it was the first time that they had really given any attention to the subject, not much could be accomplished.

I then proceeded to New York, spending the night at the Girard Hotel, taking a parlor so that I might receive some of the guests of the hotel. This had been arranged by Mr. Charles Elley Hall, who again is once more kindly helping me to make engagements for lectures in New York. The next day I went to Southport, Conn., holding there a parlor meeting and notwithstanding a kind of blizzard was raging, about twenty persons made their appearance.



An animated discussion filled the evening and many books were purchased. But as the subject was entirely new to most of those present, it will take time for them to digest what they have already heard. Miss Pomeroy who kindly invited me to her home, will, I think, pursue the study further. In New York, I am the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin, both members of the T. S. During the Christmas holidays I had an entire rest from work, and am now, with the New Year, able to take it up again with fresh vigor. The 2nd of January, Sunday, I gave two lectures. One was before the Philosophical Society in Brooklyn, a Debating Club, and most interesting it was to hear afterwards the clever and ingenious way in which they tried to tear my lecture to pieces. Some were really witty, and made funny comments on the quaint possibilities into which reincarnation might drive you. For instance some one asked, "What would happen if two souls, having through Karma to be reborn at the same time, should each choose to select the body of the child of certain parents as the best medium of its manifestations?" Instantly some one shouted, Twins. This, with many other such remarks caused much merriment. But the one sad point about it all was the utter incomprehensibility of understanding that they are Souls and not Bodies. Every thing they said was viewed from that lower standpoint. Through continual debating, they have developed well the muscles of their minds, but the spiritual faculties are yet dormant. The same evening I lectured at Walton Hall to a more congenial and sympathetic audience. The Sunday previous I had lectured in Newark and there encountered a lively discussion with a man, who though he declared himself to be a Theosophist and friend of Col. Olcott, was vehemently opposed to the idea of reincarnation.

On Monday, January 3rd, in the apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin, I received visitors for the purpose of answering questions. A great deal of interest was manifested by those who have begun to study into the noble and inspiring truths taught by Theosophy and many are growing into a broader and more comprehensive appreciation of them. The great difficulty everywhere seems to be in making people realize that they themselves must develop their spiritual faculties, no one else can do that for them, we can show them the Way—the Path—but they must tread it for themselves if they would stand on the heights and know truth at first hand. In reply to some statements made to the effect that the Early Church Fathers did not live or preach the Theosophical Doctrines, I read from "The Four Great Religions," by Annie Besant, showing that Jesus taught the esoteric truths to those capable of receiving them, but to the vast majority of unprepared minds the exoteric forms only could be given. The next day, Tuesday January 4th, I went to Shelton, Connecticut and was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Staples. The weather was cold and the roads slippery as glass, notwithstanding which my two lectures were well attended and much appreciation of Theosophy shown, for on the day of my departure Thursday morning, an hours meeting being called for mutual discussion, we found to our surprise that nearly three hours had flown by without our knowing it.

Friday evening the 7th, was the gathering of the new Branch, when Christianity in regard to higher Spiritualism and Theosophy was discussed by Mrs. Sahlin and myself. Sunday the 9th, my last public lecture here in New York was given in the Walton Hall to a packed house, both hall and corridor being crowded. Private engagements are pouring in and the remaining days spent here will be fully employed.



## REPORTS OF BRANCHES.

TOLEDO, OHIO.—Toledo T. S. holds its annual meeting on January 13th. The membership is increasing and the meetings are interesting and well attended. Especially so are the question box, and the monthly socials held at the homes of members. The propaganda work is under way, the committee having half of Ohio to work. An effort has been made to find persons interested in Theosophy in the surrounding towns in order to prepare the way for Mr. Titus when he comes to lecture in this vicinity. Findlay, Lima and Fremont are among the number which will probably be visited. Reports of meetings will be sent in later.

K. F. K.

BUFFALO, N. Y., Jan. 12, 1898.—Fidelity Lodge T. S. has gained seven new members, the result of a visit of Mr. Titus of Toronto, who is on a lecture tour among the branches in this part of the country. Mr. Titus was with us a week, during which time he held afternoon parlor talks in various parts of the city and evening lectures at the homes of people who were interested. On Wednesday evening the fifth, he lectured in the Colonial parlor, Hotel Genesser, to an audience of about fifty. Mr. Titus interested outsiders (especially the spiritualists) so much so that they have arranged to have him give a public lecture for them on Sunday afternoon and evening, January 16th promising him an audience of 400 or more. His subjects will be "Theosophy and its Relation to Spiritualism," "Religion of the Day" and "The Religion of Eternal Justice." Mr. Titus is an able lecturer and has the ability to answer questions satisfactorily, he is doing a good work and our best wishes go with him. G. B. HASTINGS, Sec.

NEW ZEALAND SECTION, Dec. 1897.—The Annual Meeting of the Christchurch Branch has been altered from May to November in order to bring it more into line with the Annual Convention of the Section, which is held as soon after Christmas as possible. The meeting held on November 16th was therefore regarded as the Annual Meeting of the Branch. The officers were re-elected, Mr. J. B. Wither being President and Mr. J. McCombs (3 York St., Christchurch) Secretary. The Branch has done good work during the year having been continuously active in public work and in study. A public meeting has been held weekly, on Sunday afternoon, having a good average attendance, while the classes have been very well attended, the H. P. B. training class being especially popular and giving promise of a good addition to the number of our lecturers at no distant date.

Dunedin Branch reports that the Theosophical Magazines have at last been accepted by the local Athenæum, and are extensively read by its members. The presence of Theosophical Magazines in our Public Libraries shows that the popular prejudice against Theosophy is slowly yielding and the number of sympathizers growing. Mrs. Draffin lectured recently in Auckland on "Scientific Proofs of the Existence of the Soul." This was an excellent lecture, drew a good audience and was followed by an interesting discussion. Mr. C. H. Baly, a member of the Auckland Branch and formerly of the Blavatsky Lodge, London, whose knowledge of Sanskrit and general good scholarship made him especially valuable, has left New Zealand for Buenos Ayres. No doubt he will be of much service to the Branch of the Society in that city. Auckland members are busy preparing for the reception and entertainment of the delegates to the forthcoming Convention.



CHICAGO ILL., January 1898—The new year has opened very well indeed, for us. We have reached the century mark in membership and a general interest and activity mark the weekly meetings. The Sunday afternoon meetings are fairly established and the attendance is increasing. Mrs. Edith Sears has lectured several times and last Sunday Miss Josephine Locke, Superintendent of drawing in the public schools, lectured on "The Spiritual Idea in Art and Architecture," illustrated with pictures. Mrs. Sears will occupy the platform January 23rd, her subject being "The First Initiation of the Christ." January 30th Prof. Oscar L. Triggs of the University of Chicago, will speak on "The Spiritual Idea in Walt Whitman." A further program will be arranged to reach on to Easter. Dr. Mary Weeks Burnett was with us during the holiday season and left the first of the month for Iowa. Encouraging reports of her work are coming in. I told you in my previous report that we were going to take up the study of Mrs. Besant's book, "Ancient Wisdom." Well, we have commenced it, using for a guide the "Outline of Study" prepared by the committee appointed for that purpose at the Annual Convention. But we have struck a rock at the first question, what is evolution? There we are and all sorts of authorities, spiritual, material, scientific and what not are brought forward to enlarge upon this most vital of questions. For it is really the very basis of our philosophy. Is it not? But if you object to the word basis as too general, you must surely admit that it is the connerstone. Goodby for this month.

P. G. K.

SEATTLE, Jan. 21, 1898—Ananda Lodge has lost two of its members during the past month. Mr. Chas A. White, an earnest Theosophist for many years and one of our charter members passed away on January 11th after a gradual decline lasting perhaps three years. Mr. White deeded his property to the Theosophical Society for the purpose of translating the Sanscrit writings into English. The lodge held appropriate services on Sunday afternoon conducted by Mr. Barnes. The body has been sent to San Francisco for cremation. On Sunday January 16th, Miss Maud Spear, another of our members and an earnest loving soul passed away to rest after a severe illness. The lodge held services at the home of the parents who are also Theosophists. Mrs. Gilles conducted the services which were very beautiful and served to show to those attending the beauty and grandeur of a belief in Theosophy, especially in the hour of death. We have gained one new member. The lodge has adopted the plan of committing to memory extracts from Theosophical Literature more especially the "Voice of the Silence" and at the Wednesday evening meetings some of the members are called upon to repeat passages, thus filling our minds with these lofty thoughts and ever striving to embody them in action.

HARRIET C. STEIN.

TORONTO, CANADA, January 1898—The past month for us has been one of considerable anxiety, Mr. Titus, who is energy personified, having been away from us, organizing branches in the Province of Ontario and some of the nearby cities in the State of New York. At our Sunday meetings, addresses have been given on "The Law of Karma," "Teachings of Swedenborg" and "Poetry of Reincarnation." In study class the "Ancient Wisdom" has proved a source of interest and profit, not in the politico-economic sense of course. Our regular monthly social was held January 14th, some of Thos. Carlyle views being



dealt with in short papers and interspersed with mandolin solos, songs, readings, etc. F. A. B.

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DENVER, COL., Jan. 6th.—The Brotherhood Branch has struggled along like all other new branches, but the New Year seems bright and we begin with a membership of thirty-five, all harmonious and earnest students, many coming in through the efforts of the Brahmacharin. We hope that he may soon return again. We are just finishing the study of "Man and His Bodies" and shall take up "Ancient Wisdom" this month. We have a library and much interest is manifested, the books are eagerly sought for. The Society soon expects to have a room for the exclusive use of the Branch meetings and hope to meet once a month in a social way to become better acquainted with each other.

ALICE PRENTICE, Sec'y.

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SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., Jan 6th.—The past month has been one of increasing interest in the different courses of study taken up by Golden Gate Lodge. On Sunday evenings the following public lectures have been given. "The Law of Compassion," by Miss Nellie Dashiell; "Belief and Knowledge," by Mr. Charles Neilson; "Devotion as a means to the Liberation of the Soul," by William John Walters; "The Astral Plane," a symposium by six members of the Branch.

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### THEOSOPHY IN ARIZONA.

On January 5th while in Pnomia, Cal., I received instructions from the Pacific Coast Division for Propaganda work to go to Arizona and spread the knowledge of the truths of Theosophy wherever there was an opportunity. Los Angeles was first visited in order to make arrangements for the trip. A little time was spent there interesting members and friends in the proposed propaganda work, and it met with a prompt response. Sunday the 9th, was spent with Unity Lodge in Pasadena and a lecture was delivered on "Whom did Jesus Worship?" Unity Lodge is doing well and takes an active and practical interest in the Arizona work. The direct start for Arizona was made Wednesday January 12th. Reached Needles, Cal., Thursday morning. Severely cold weather made it impossible to do anything there. The next stop was at Kingman, Arizona. I lectured on the 14th in the Kingman School House to an audience of about one hundred on the general outlines of Theosophy. By request of the audience another lecture was given the next afternoon on "Reincarnation." This lecture was announced from the Methodist pulpit, without my solicitation, by the minister who had heard the first lecture. About one hundred and twenty-five were present and the questions asked showed great interest. Was delayed all day at Ash Fork by a railroad accident. Arrived at Jerome on the evening of the 18th, after a remarkable journey over the crookiest railroad in the world. It is the United Verde & Pacific Railway, 26 miles long, has 188 curves and 143 bridges. As it winds in and out of the side hill it affords rapidly changing views of the Verde Valley from 1000 to 2000 feet below. The scene was inspiring enough to furnish material for a series of lectures upon the wonders of Nature. Jerome is a flourishing mining camp of about 2000 inhabitants. A severe snow storm made it difficult to climb the mountainous streets, but still there was an excellent attendance at the two lectures



in the Baptist Church. This church is the favorite public hall of the camp. I spoke the second night by request upon "Karma." An active interest was manifested and further addresses would have been made, but the only available halls had been previously engaged, so additional work had to be postponed. Arrived in Prescott yesterday evening, the 21st, and will speak in the K. of P. Hall, to-morrow night and probably in the Court House on Monday. There are a number here who are interested and a profitable visit is anticipated. The local newspapers have been very generous in aiding to spread the truth by giving extended notices, both before and after the lectures without charge.

Yours Fraternally,  
WILL C. BAILEY.

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HONOLULU, H. I. Feb. 3, 1898.—Miss Walsh at the request of the Aloha Branch of T. S. of Honolulu, very kindly consented to devote some time to this city, where she arrived January 4th after a rough voyage on the steamer "Australia." She immediately set down to her Theosophical work and gave out successively public lectures on "Man and his Destiny," "Power of Thought," "Karma, or The Law of Action and Reaction," and "Reincarnation and the Law of Compassion." These meetings were well attended in spite of the inclemency of the weather, the headquarters of the Branch, at Harmony Hall, being taxed to their full extent of over 200 seats. Besides a number of E. S. meetings, Miss Walsh also gave nine class meetings, on the "The Heavenly Man," "The Three Evolutions," with diagrams, "Functions of Life through Atoms," "Right Breathing," "Right Eating," "Law of Gradation in Evolution," "Training of Psychic Faculties," "Power of Will" and "Duties of Theosophists;" these were public though more particularly intended for the members of the Branch and the students more especially interested, and in several occasions, the attendance was over seventy-five. The lecturer was also requested to speak on "Concepts of Theosophy" before the Rebecca Lodge of A. O. O. F. of the town, which turned out a very pleasant and social meeting, enlivened by sweet music, and she further gave six parlor talks, two of which on "Woman" and on "The Esoteric Christ," gathered a full room of more than fifty. Miss Walsh, as a whole has been exceedingly successful in her work; and outside of making earnest friends, through her kindly and amiable manner, of all those she met, she has also decidedly stirred up a great interest in Theosophy among the most intelligent people of this cosmopolitan town, and she was justly given a most sympathetic reception by the press, the four local newspapers spontaneously giving full reports of her speeches, with very favorable comments, besides constant notices of all her work and meetings. In fact her visit has brought out a striking change in the attitude and feeling of the press towards Theosophy, which was formerly ridiculed and derided, and now always given a respectful hearing and all the necessary space. Moreover, many persons have manifested the intention of joining the Theosophical Society, and next week a beginner's class, under the care of Dr. A. Marques will be started for the benefit of the new students, while the advanced class on "Ancient Wisdom" will be continued with fresh vigor and enthusiasm. The Aloha Branch has a regular and very harmonious membership of twenty-five, which we expect will soon be doubled, while its valuable library of Theosophical works is being constantly drawn upon by a large number of outsiders. Another very pleasant feature of Miss Walsh's visit was the amiable relation be-



tween the members of the Aloha Branch and the followers, five in number, of the Judgeite Society, who were cordially invited to all the meetings and lectures and cordially and gratefully responded, as friendly fellow students of the great truths of Theosophy, the first of which are Brotherhood and Tolerance, and we hope the example of this distant locality will be followed elsewhere.

Miss Walsh will return by the "Australia," on the 5th of February, carrying with her the thanks and good wishes of all who are here instructed in Theosophy, as expressed in an address which was presented to her by the Aloha Branch, and also our unanimous regrets that her visit would not be made longer because the subjects she treated so masterly and scientifically only gave us a thirst for more. It is therefore intended for the Branch to arrange for another and more lengthy visit next year, and, in the meantime, we wish Miss Walsh God speed and all the success she so fully deserves wherever she may carry her noble and disinterested work.

A. M.

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LOS ANGELES, CAL., Jan. 26, 1898.—In commencing the new year Harmony Lodge sends its greetings to its parent and sister societies and earnestly hope that we as a whole may, by tireless and unselfish work bring humanity one step nearer our cherished goal, the realization of Universal Brotherhood. December 26th the following officers were elected: Mr. J. Haskel, President; Mr. G. Valiant, vice-president; Miss Stella Michelsen, Corresponding Secretary; Mr. C. Haskel, Treasurer; Mrs. L. M. Cleveland, Librarian. A propaganda and visiting committee was also formed. December 26th, Mr. W. C. Bailey delivered a very interesting lecture on "Whom did Jesus Worship." Mr. Bailey's calm but earnest delivery and his logical arguments won many friends for himself and the Society. Mr. Bailey left the following day for Arizona. Very instructive lectures were delivered by the following: Jan. 2, "An Epitome of Theosophy," Mr. Randolph; Jan. 9, "What is Death," M. J. Lapsley; Jan. 16, "Is it Wrong to take Life and Why?" Miss Nelson; Jan. 23, "An Evening with the Poets," Mr. O. P. Taylor.

STELLA MICHELSEN, Sec.

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## BOOK REVIEWS.

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We are glad to see in the January THEOSOPHICAL REVIEW the report of new life in the Paris Lodge. J. C. Chatterji contributes a convincing article proving that Buddha taught the "Persistence of the Individual." Mrs. Besant's paper on "Some Results of Evolution," is up to her usual high standard. She says "Ignorance and Conceit are twin sisters, and only as we become wise do we clothe ourselves with humility." Mrs. Firth asks a vital question, "Are we to give our children definite instruction or are we to use our Theosophical knowledge to further their evolution, but keep that knowledge carefully back from them? We learn from "*Theosophy in Australia*" that work is progressing in that quarter of the globe. The readers of *Sophia* are supplied with four excellent maps of Atlantis reproduced in colors. Senor Soria continues his interesting article on "Genesis." The rest of the December number is made up mostly of continuations of excellent translations. A very fine portrait of H. A. Dharmapala makes the frontpiece of *The Chicago Vegetarian*, which also contains a good article by him on the "Best Food for Man." Miss Edger's Adyar lectures according to *The Hindu* are a great success. A late number of



the *Arjuna* has an excellent editorial on Mrs. Besant and the American Section. Julian Hawthorne in his serial now being published in *Mind* makes use of the impossible and somewhat hackneyed plot of a so called "Mahatma" who has need of a beautiful young woman to help him in his occult work. The Countess Canavarro says the Journal of the *Maha Bodhi Society* is looking for suitable buildings to be used as an orphanage for girls and a convent for Buddhist women in Ceylon. Mr. Leadbeater continues his article on "Devachan" in *Le Lotus Bleu*, Mr. Pascal contributes a practical article on the question of teaching occultism to the masses. Other magazines received are "The Vahan," "The Realm," "The World's Advance Thought," "Rays of Light," "Die Uebersinnliche Welt," "Nova Lux," "The Brahmavadin," "Light of Truth," "The Theosophic Gleaner," "The Dawn," "Balder," "Faith and Hope Messenger," "The Philosophical Journal" and "The Prasnotara."

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How We Master our Fate by Ursula N. Gestefeld—In this book are collected a number of helpful articles written originally from the Exodus and the purpose of which is to arouse man to a conscious sense of his own power and of the possibilities now latent within him. "Letting the Dead Bury its Dead," "The Hidden Body," "Words as Storage Batteries" are especially good.

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The Breath of Life, by Ursula N. Gestefeld,—This little book is evidently intended as a companion to "How we Master our Fate," and contains verbatim formulæ of very suggestive thoughts and affirmations to be used as mental treatments for the various ills of life. These books are published by the Gestefeld Company, New York.

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### IMPORTANT NOTICE!

Commencing with the March issue of "MERCURY" a Directory will be printed each month containing the following information: Names and addresses of officers of Branches and Time and Places of meeting.

Branch Secretaries are urgently requested to supply the above data as soon as possible, sending the same direct to "MERCURY," Palace Hotel, San Francisco.



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